

REMARKS

The Official Action mailed November 30, 2004, has been received and its contents carefully noted. This response is filed within three months of the mailing date of the Official Action and therefore is believed to be timely without extension of time. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that this response is being timely filed.


The Applicant notes with appreciation the consideration of the Information Disclosure Statements filed on December 27, 2000, July 3, 2001, June 18, 2002, June 28, 2002, December 12, 2002, and September 14, 2004. However, the Applicant has not received acknowledgment of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 17, 2004. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner provide an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 evidencing consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 17, 2004.

Claims 109-166 are pending in the present application, of which claims 109, 113, 117, 121, 125, 129, 133, 137, 141, 144, 147, 149, 151, 153, 155, 157, 159, 161, 163, and 165 are independent. The independent claims have been amended to clarify the abbreviation "DLC" in that "DLC" has been changed to "diamond-like carbon." For the reasons set forth in detail below, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Paragraph 2 of the Official Action rejects claims 109-166 under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 2, 26, and 50 of U.S. Patent No. 6,621,535 to Fukada. In response to this rejection, a *Terminal Disclaimer* is submitted herewith. Upon filing of this *Terminal Disclaimer*, the claims of the present invention are now believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness-type double patenting rejections are requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric J. Robinson
Reg. No. 38,285

Robinson Intellectual Property Law Office, P.C.
PMB 955
21010 Southbank Street
Potomac Falls, Virginia 20165
(571) 434-6789